(b) if so, the number of parsons killed due to terrorist violence in different parts of the country during the last six months;

(c) whether Government propose to establish a rehabilitation fund for victims of terrorism; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTR OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M. M. JACOB: (a), (c) and (d) Government is fully alive to the situation created by the terrorist elements in some parts of the country and is determined to ensure that a durable climate of peace, stability and progress prevails throughout the country. The direct responsibility for dealing with the terrorist activities lies with the State Government. 'Public Order' being a state subject, it is for the state governments concerned to devise various methods and take concrete steps to improve law and order situation, as well as extend financial and other assistance to the victims. At the central level action is taken to facilitate coordination of the anti-terrorist operation of different states and to improve flow of information useful for control of terrorist activities among the states. All possible assistance is also being provided to the state governments when required.

(b) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Infiltration in Jammu and Kashmir

1847. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:-

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news report published in the Poineer of Aprill 29, 1992 regarding the infiltration of about 8000 Kashmiri mercenaries armed with spohisticated weaponary into Kashmir Valley; and

(b) if so, what further steps Government have taken to check infiltration from Pakistan into Jammu and Kashmir?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M. M. JACOB): (a) Yes, Sir, However, there is no confirmed report of any large scale infiltration into J & K from across the border.

(b) The security forces have continued a strong vigil on the border against attempts of infiltration/exfiltration.

Political initiative in Jammu and Kashmir

1848. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to take any fresh political initiative to tackle the situation in Jammu and Kashmir;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard;

(c) whether Government have considered the developments in Afghanistan in relation to its impact on Pakistan's attitude and involvement in Jammu and Kashmir; and

(d) if so, what is Government's assesments in this regard and to what extent it would affect the situation in Jammu and Kashmir?

THE MINISTR OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M. M. JACOB): (a) to (d) Efforts have

been made to strengthen interaction with the public in the State. A State Level Advisory Council with twelve non-official prominent persons has been set-up. Efforts have also been made to associate prominent citizens in formal or informal arrangements in redressal of genuine grievances and for attending to development matters. Recently five prominent persons having political affiliations were released from detention.

The Government are keen to create favourable conditions for holding elections as soon as possible so that a representative Government can take office.

The Government is carefully watching the developments in Afghanistan and all appropriate measures will be taken to safeguard India's security and territorial integrity.

Death of publisher under police custody

1849. SHRI KAPIL VERMA:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the report about the printer and publisher of a Tamil weekly who died after his alleged torture in police custody recently causing great resentment among journalists of the country;

(b) whether Government have obtained any report from the Tamil Nadu Government, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTR OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M. M. JACOB): (a) to (c) Necessary information is being collected from the State Government of Tamil Nadu and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Repealing of Official Secrets Act

1856. DR. SANJAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Press Council of India has suggested the repeal of the Official Secrets Act; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M. M. JACOB): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Official Secrets Act, 1923, contains provisions for proceedings against persons indulging in espionage activities, wrongful communication etc. of information, unauthorised use of uniforms, falsification of report, forgery, personation, harbouring of spies etc. It would, therefore, not be in public interest to repeal this Act.

राज्यपालों के रिक्त पद

1851. **श्री शंकर दयाल सिंह :** क्या गृह मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) इस समय कौन-कौन से राज्यों और संघ राज्य क्षेत्रों में राज्यपाल के पद रिक्त हैं ; और

(ख) सरकार इन पदों को कब तक भरने का विचार रखती है ?

संसदीय कार्य मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री और गृह मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री श्री एम० एम० जैकब) : (क) और (ख) संविधान के अनुच्छेद 153 के अधीन उपबंधों के अनुसार